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Akin Announces Staff Changes

WASHINGTON- U.S. Rep. Todd Akin (R-MO) has added new staff and has promoted several existing staff members in his Washington, D.C. office as the 108th Congress gets underway. "We've put together a terrific team that is hard at work for the people of Missouri and our country," Akin said.

Akin has tapped **Rob Schwarzwald** to serve as his chief of staff. Scharzwald, who began his new position in December, served on the staffs of former U.S. Senator and current Ambassador to Germany Dan Coats (R-IN) and former U.S. Rep. Bill Baker (R-CA). Schwarzwald was director of corporate communications at the National Association of Manufacturers and most recently was chief speechwriter for Health and Human Services Secretary Tommy Thompson in the Bush Administration.

Amanda Carman, who has served on Akin's staff since the beginning of his first term, will continue to serve as Executive Assistant, managing the office and maintaining the Congressman's schedule.

Franz Kohler, a veteran Akin staffer, will be the Congressman's legislative assistant for the Small Business Subcommittee on Workforce, Empowerment and Government Programs, of which Akin recently was named chairman. Kohler will continue to handle all economic, tax, banking and finance issues, as well as judiciary and immigration. Kohler formerly was general manager of the St. Louis Steinway Piano Gallery and is a graduate of Wheaton (IL) College. He currently is working on his MA in history from the University of Missouri-St. Louis.

Elizabeth Sharp has come on board as Akin's military legislative assistant. She will direct the Congressman's initiatives on House Armed Services Committee and will also work on international relations, veterans affairs, homeland security, federal employee and postal affairs and transportation and infrastructure issues. Sharp, a graduate of the University of Tennessee, formerly worked on the press staff of the HASC and recently was Legislative Director for Ervin Technical Associates.

Lauren Ellis, a St. Louis native, will continue as legislative assistant for Akin's Science Committee assignment and for healthcare, Social Security, agriculture, labor, trade, energy and environmental issues. Ellis graduated from Vanderbilt University and started in Akin's office as staff assistant.

Tom Carpenter, another University of Tennessee graduate, will has been promoted from legislative correspondent to legislative aide, in which capacity he will manage pro-life, telecommunications, human rights and AIDS issues and will remain Akin's lead legislative correspondent. Carpenter also served as staff assistant prior to joining the legislative staff.

Ryan Bradel, who graduated from UCLA last year, will continue as staff assistant and has

assumed legislative correspondent duties as well.